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DEPARTMENT FOR WHA, PRM, PM

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SUBJECT: ICRC PLEASED WITH COLOMBIAN MILITARY

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for Reasons 1.4(b)&(d)

1.(U) Ambassador Wood met with International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Director of Operations Pierre Krahenbuhl on January 26. Krahenbuhl expressed his gratitude for USG support for ICRC, adding that while we may not agree on every issue, U.S. financial and policy support has been critical worldwide.

2.(C) Krahenbuhl said he had congratulated the Colombian military for its curriculum and training in International Humanitarian Law (IHL). They absolutely get it, he said, but the key is implementing IHL universally in the field. Ambassador agreed, adding that the USG was assisting Colombia in strengthening their military justice system to address abuse issues.

3.(C) Krahenbuhl noted that the GoC,s paramilitary demobilization process was unprecedented since it was being conducted in a country with an active armed conflict. He said ICRC was especially concerned that the National Reconciliation Commission address the issues of forced disappearances and IDP land rights. Ambassador agreed that an accounting for the disappeared was central to the reconciliation and reparations process. Wood noted that the issue of IDP land rights was more problematic since the majority of IDPs never had title to the land they worked. This would make any legal challenge on their behalf extremely difficult.

4. (U) Ambassador praised ICRC Head of Delegation Juan Pedro Schaerer,s outstanding work in Colombia and said we look forward to working with Schaerer,s replacement, Barbara Hintermann (former ICRC Rep in Guinea), who arrives in March.

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